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**FORMER SOUTH LAKE TAHOE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER PLEADS
GUILTY TO POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that KARSTEN GRONWOLD, 50, of South Lake Tahoe, pleaded guilty today to possessing visual depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. He entered his guilty in Sacramento before United States District Judge William B. Shubb.

This case is the product of a joint investigation by the Sacramento Valley Hi-Tech Crimes Task Force and the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department as a part of Project Safe Childhood (PSC). Project Safe Childhood is a United States Department of Justice initiative established to increase federal prosecutions of violent sexual predators of children. For additional information on the PSC initiative, please go to www.projectsafefchildhood.gov or call the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator. This investigation resulted from complaints made to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline (www.cybertipline.com or 1-800-843-5678). The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is a congressionally mandated national clearinghouse that gathers information about missing and exploited children for law enforcement use.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Camil A. Skipper, who is prosecuting the case, GRONWOLD admitted as part of his guilty plea that he had possessed hundreds of

depictions of minor boys engaged in sexually explicit conduct, including oral copulation, anal penetration, and other sexual acts. As part of his plea, GRONWOLD also admitted that in 1999 or 2000 he took a picture of himself and an identified minor child engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Although he did not plead guilty to the production of the image, GRONWOLD agreed that his sentence would be based upon that conduct.

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Shubb on October 29, 2007. As part of the plea agreement, GRONWOLD and the United States have agreed to a sentence of 97 months imprisonment. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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